

§511.31

judicial review or otherwise to contest the validity of the order;

(3) A description of the alleged non-compliance, or violation;

(4) Provisions to the effect that the allegations of the complaint are resolved by the proposed consent agreement and order;

(5) A listing of the acts or practices from which the respondent shall refrain;

(6) A detailed statement of the corrective action(s) which the respondent shall excute and the civil penalty, if any, that respondent shall pay.

(e) *Transmittal.* The Presiding Officer shall transmit to the Administrator for decision all offers of settlement and accompanying memoranda that meet the requirements enumerated in paragraph (d) of this section. The Presiding Officer may, but need not, recommend acceptance or rejection of such offers. Any party or participant may object to a proposed consent agreement by filing a motion and supporting memorandum with the Administrator.

(f) *Stay of proceedings.* When an offer of settlement has been agreed to by the parties and has been transmitted to the Administrator, the proceedings shall be stayed until the Administrator has ruled on the offer. When an offer of settlement has been made and transmitted to the Administrator but has not been agreed to by all parties, the proceedings shall not be stayed pending the Administrator's decision on the offer.

(g) *Administrator's ruling.* The Administrator will rule upon all transmitted offers of settlement. If the Administrator accepts the offer, the Administrator shall issue an appropriate order. The order shall become effective upon issuance. In determining whether to accept an offer of settlement, the Administrator will consider the gravity of the alleged violation, and any good faith efforts by the respondent to comply with applicable requirements.

(h) *Rejection.* If the Administrator rejects an offer of settlement, the Administrator shall give written notice of that decision and the reasons therefor to the parties and the Presiding Officer. Promptly thereafter, the Presiding Officer shall issue an order notifying the parties of the resumption of the

49 CFR Ch. V (10–1–01 Edition)

proceedings, including any modifications to the schedule resulting from the stay of the proceedings.

(i) *Effect of rejected offer.* Rejected offers of settlement shall not be admissible in evidence over the objection of any signatory, nor shall the fact of the proposal of the offer be admissible in evidence.

[45 FR 81578, Dec. 11, 1980, as amended at 53 FR 15783, May 3, 1988]

Subpart D—Discovery; Compulsory Process

§511.31 General provisions governing discovery.

(a) *Applicability.* The discovery rules established in this subpart are applicable to the discovery of information among the parties to a proceeding. Parties seeking information from persons not parties may do so by subpoena in accordance with §511.38.

(b) *Discovery methods.* Parties may obtain discovery by one or more of the following methods: (1) Written interrogatories; (2) requests for production of documents or things; (3) requests for admissions; or (4) testimony upon oral examination. Unless the Presiding Officer otherwise orders under paragraph (d) of this section, the frequency of use of these methods is not limited.

(c) *Scope of discovery.* The scope of discovery is as follows:

(1) *In general.* Parties may obtain discovery regarding any matter not privileged, which is relevant to the subject matter involved in the proceedings, whether it relates to the claim or defense of the party seeking discovery or to the claim or defense of any other party. It is not ground for objection that the information sought will be inadmissible at the hearing if the information sought appears reasonably calculated to lead to the discovery of admissible evidence.

(2) *Exception.* Parties may not obtain discovery of documents which accompanied the staff's recommendation as to whether a complaint should issue or of documents or portions thereof which would be exempt from discovery under Rule 26(b)(3) of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure.

(3) *Hearing preparation: Experts.* A party may obtain discovery of facts

known and opinions held by experts, regardless of whether they are acquired or developed in anticipation of or for litigation. Such discovery may be had by any of the methods provided in paragraph (b) of this section.

(d) *Protective orders.* Upon motion by a party or person and for good cause shown, the Presiding Officer may make any order which justice requires to protect such party or person from annoyance, embarrassment, competitive disadvantage, oppression or undue burden or expense, including one or more of the following: (1) That the discovery shall not be had; (2) that the discovery may be had only on specified terms and conditions, including a designation of the time and/or place; (3) that the discovery shall be had only by a method of discovery other than that selected by the party seeking discovery; (4) that certain matters shall not be inquired into, or that the scope of discovery shall be limited to certain matters; (5) that discovery shall be conducted with no one present except persons designated by the Presiding Officer; (6) that a trade secret or other confidential research, development, or commercial information shall not be disclosed or shall be disclosed only in a designated way or only to designated parties; and (7) that responses to discovery shall be placed *in camera* in accordance with § 511.45.

If a motion for a protective order is denied in whole or in part, the Presiding Officer may, on such terms or conditions as are just, order that any party provide or permit discovery.

(e) *Sequence and timing of discovery.* Discovery may commence at any time after filing of the answer. Unless otherwise provided in these Rules or by order of the Presiding Officer, methods of discovery may be used in any sequence and the fact that a party is conducting discovery shall not operate to delay any other party's discovery.

(f) *Supplementation of responses.* A party who has responded to a request for discovery shall supplement the response with information thereafter acquired.

(g) *Completion of discovery.* All discovery shall be completed as soon as practical but in no case longer than one hundred fifty (150) days after

issuance of a complaint unless otherwise ordered by the Presiding Officer in exceptional circumstances and for good cause shown. All discovery shall be served by a date which affords the party from whom discovery is sought the full response period provided by these Rules.

(h) *Service and filing of discovery.* All discovery requests and written responses, and all notices of the taking of testimony, shall be filed with the Docket Section and served on all parties and the Presiding Officer.

(i) *Control of discovery.* The use of these discovery procedures is subject to the control of the Presiding Officer, who may issue any just and appropriate order for the purpose of ensuring their timely completion.

[45 FR 81578, Dec. 11, 1980, as amended at 53 FR 15783, May 3, 1988]

§ 511.32 Written interrogatories to parties.

(a) *Availability; procedures for use.* Any party may serve upon any other party written interrogatories to be answered by the party served or, if the party served is a public or private corporation or a partnership or association or governmental agency, by any officer or agent, who shall furnish such information as is available to the party. Interrogatories may, without leave of the Presiding Officer, be served upon any party after filing of the answer.

(b) *Procedures for response.* Each interrogatory shall be answered separately and fully in writing under oath, unless it is objected to, in which event the reasons for objection shall be stated in lieu of an answer. The answers are to be signed by a responsible representative of the respondent and the objections signed by the representative making them. The party upon whom the interrogatories have been served shall serve a copy of the answers, and objections if any, within 30 days after service of the interrogatories. The Presiding Officer may allow a shorter or longer time for response. The party submitting the interrogatories may move for an order under § 511.36 with respect to any objection to or other failure to answer an interrogatory.